

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

DPW-01 IO-12 OMB-01 AID-20 RSR-01 /116 W

----- 001457

R 080600 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3991

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3486

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINT, LA

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER' S VIEWS ON LAO NEGOTIATIONS

1. ON MAY 7 I GAVE PRIME MINISTER LAOS/ CAMBODIA SECTION OF
PRESIDENT NIXON' S FOREIGN POLICY REPORT. HE PERUSED REPORT IN
MY PRESENCE AND NOTED WITH PLEASURE REFERENCE TO USG WELCOMING
FEBRUARY VIENTIANE AGREEMENT AND CONTINUED USG DIPLOMATIC

SUPPORT FOR PRIME MINISTER' S EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A PEACE IN
LAOS.

2. I THEN ASKED PRIME MINISTER STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH
PHOUMI VONGVICHIT. SOUVANNA REPLIED THAT DRAFT PROTOCOL WHICH
PHOUMI BROUGHT BACK FROM SAM NEUA IS UNACCEPTABLE. AS LONG AS
POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROBLEMS ARE LINKED TOGETHER, NO RAPID
PROGRESS IN NEGOTIATIONS CAN BE MADE. SOUVANNA SAID HE SO
INFORMED PHOUMI. SOUVANNA WILL RECEIVE PHOUMI AGAIN MAY 8 AND
HE THEN EXPECTS PHOUMI TO RETURN TO SAM NEUA TO REPORT ON
SOUVANNA' S POSITION. SOUVANNA INSISTS ON SOLVING POLITICAL
PROBLEMS FIRST; I. E. FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT AND JOINT
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NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL NOW, AND RESOLUTION OF MILITARY PROBLEMS AT A LATER STAGE.

3. SOUVANNA SAID HE WAS PLEASED BY STEADY REDUCTION IN CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS. OVER LAST FEW DAYS VIOLATIONS HAVE REACHED NEW LOW; THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL DAYS LAST WEEK WITHOUT ANY VIOLATIONS. CEASEFIRE IS MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AND SOUVANNA STRESSED NOTHING SHOULD BE DONE TO JEOPARDIZE IT. FACT THAT FIGHTING HAS DECLINED ALSO MEANS THAT RLG IS NO LONGER UNDER PRESSURE TO ACCEPT UNREASONABLE LPF DEMANDS IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY FIELDS.

4. SOUVANNA CONCLUDED THAT HE DOES NOT EXPECT SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN LAO NEGOTIATIONS AS LONG AS HANOI DOESN' T GIVE LPF GREEN LIGHT. SOUVANNA OBSERVED THAT ON BASIS HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, HE IS CONVINCED PROGRESS IN LAO NEGOTIATIONS IS LINKED TO MOVEMENT IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM. FORTUNATELY, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CEASEFIRE IN LAOS MAKES WAITING BY LAOPARTIES FOR THE PIECES TO FALL INTO LINE IN REST OF INDOCHINA BEARABLE.

5. I ALSO RAISED WITH PRIME MINISTER MAY 11 OPENING OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. SOUVANNA DID NOT KNOW WHETHER PHOUI SANANIKONE WOULD RUN FOR REELECTION TO PRESIDENCY. IF HE DOES, SOUVANNA SAID QUESTION OF WHO IS VICE PRESIDENT TAKES ON ADDED IMPORTANCE BECAUSE OF PHOUI' S FAILING HEALTH. SOUVANNA DID NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY OF NGON SANANIKONE BEING CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT OF ASSEMBLY IF BROTHER PHOUI' S HEALTH SHOULD FORCE INCUMBENT TO WITHDRAW.
DEAN

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